

Inspection of Highfields Inclusion Partnership

Highfields, Essex Road, Brinnington, Stockport, Cheshire SK5 8DR

Inspection dates: 28–29 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

When pupils arrive at Highfields, they respond well to routines and leaders' high expectations. Staff consistently follow agreed policies, for example in their support and management of pupils' behaviour.

Many pupils experience difficulties in their social, emotional and mental well-being. Staff make sure that they find out the root causes of these concerns. For example, some pupils struggle with reading and in understanding what they have read. This can lead to frustration and anxiety. Teachers use this information to plan lessons with sensitivity. Pupils spoken to said that they appreciate this support. They said that this builds up their confidence to then attempt new work or other challenges in class.

Pupils' attendance improves when they come to Highfields. Those spoken to felt safe because staff form supportive relationships with them and listen to their concerns.

Pupils are encouraged to develop their reading and writing skills in different subjects. Pupils spoken to said that they do not choose to read in their free time or for enjoyment.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

A new leadership team and governing body are now in place since the school was last inspected. Staff, pupils, parents and carers are motivated by the clear vision and direction that have been set. Staff say that their opinions are valued. They feel included when discussing how the school can develop and improve.

Pupils accept that their behaviour has consequences. If they engage in and complete work, they receive rewards. They also learn that unacceptable behaviour may result in a sanction, for example loss of free time. Fixed-term exclusions have reduced over time. Staff manage pupils' misbehaviour calmly. Staff in the school's 'extension unit' are skilled and support pupils who become agitated back into class.

The school's curriculum is intended to re-engage pupils in learning. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) programme is at the heart of all lessons. Staff know that in order for all pupils to be successful, they need to develop good personal and social skills to become valued citizens. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are disadvantaged. The success of the curriculum is evident in the number of pupils who return to a mainstream school. In 2019, most pupils who left Year 11 gained a range of GCSE and other qualifications, allowing them to secure a place in further education. The curriculum is being further developed in key stage 3 so that pupils have access to an even broader range of subjects.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is promoted well. Pupils show respect for each other and towards adults. Pupils learn about different

faiths in weekly assemblies. They are tolerant of differences, for example the inclusion of transgender pupils.

Partnership working with local secondary headteachers is successful. However, some of the pupils who join this school have not had their social, emotional and mental health needs identified early enough in their previous school. Leaders are working to share best practice in this earlier, to ensure that these pupils receive more timely support.

Teachers use information about pupils' learning and behaviour to improve the quality of education. In history, pupils were enthusiastic when sharing their views about when the 'space race' started. Pupils completed a task where they needed to sequence a number of events in chronological order. Pupils spoken to demonstrated a good understanding of this concept. Strong relationships between staff and pupils and the good quality of education were evident in all lessons visited, for example in mathematics and PSHE.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding procedures and policies are securely implemented. The staff recruitment procedures, including the record of checks made on staff, are well maintained and managed.

Training for all staff and governors is effective, with safeguarding being a vital part of induction for new staff. The staff spoken to knew the procedures they should follow if they have a safeguarding concern. The school has established partnership working with the local police in regard to previous community tensions. This has led to a large reduction in negative reports about pupils from the school.

Online safety is delivered through the computing curriculum so that pupils are clear about which sites they can access. School computers are well monitored, with a weekly summary of staff and pupil use.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have forged positive working relationships with local secondary school headteachers. Sometimes pupils come to Highfields with insufficient information about their learning, social, emotional and mental health needs. Leaders should further promote the sharing of best practice at Highfields with secondary school partners so that pupils' needs can be more accurately identified at an earlier stage.
- Pupils do not routinely choose to read for pleasure. This prevents pupils from developing this important life skill and could be a barrier to future learning.

Leaders should encourage pupils to develop a love of reading and to see it as a vital life skill.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	134623
Local authority	Stockport
Inspection number	10121985
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jayne Quinn
Headteacher	Janice Cahill OBE
Website	www.hip.stockport.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the school was last inspected, a new executive headteacher has been appointed, supported by an interim headteacher.
- There has been a review of governance and a reconstitution of the governing body since the last inspection.
- There has been a review of how pupil premium funding is being used since the last inspection.
- The school meets the needs of pupils who have been permanently excluded or are at risk of exclusion from their mainstream secondary school.
- The school works in partnership with Stockport secondary schools to meet the needs of pupils who have been, or who are at risk of being, excluded from their mainstream school.
- Some pupils have work-based placements at Broadstones School in Stockport.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the executive headteacher, headteacher, deputy headteacher and a range of staff, including subject and other leaders and support and administrative staff. The lead inspector met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body, a local authority representative and two Stockport secondary school headteachers.
- We focused deeply on reading, mathematics, history and PSHE education during the inspection. We looked at the school's curriculum and related policies, planning documents, visited lessons and examined pupils' workbooks. We also met with pupils and teachers to discuss pupils' learning in these subjects. An inspector listened to pupils read in different contexts.
- We looked at the school's safeguarding arrangements and related policies. They focused upon how the school recruits staff, the quality of staff and governor training and how pupils are kept safe.

Inspection team

Jon Ashley, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Kathleen McArthur	Ofsted Inspector

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